

Sept. 2, 1995

Docket Number 93-48

Office of the Secretary of the FCC
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

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Federal Communications Commissioners,

Your agency has been asked to clarify and strengthen the guidelines of the Children's Television Act. I have reviewed a copy of MM Docket No. 93-48.

I was gratified to read that you find the "current definition of educational and informational programming does not provide licensees with sufficient guidance regarding their obligation to air programming specifically designed to serve children's educational and informational needs."

The same applies to the viewer and what he expects educational programming to be. How can I go to the program director of the local station and ask, "Which of these programs are airing to fulfill the guidelines of the CTA" if neither of us has guidelines. Our local station considers having the area children draw weather pictures which are shown on the nightly 10:20 weather news as "being an educational program."

Commissioner James H. Quello makes a statement, Who Speaks for the First Amendment? I ask, Who Speaks for the Children? Page 34 of the Docket states, "the case law suggests the government has a substantial interest in furthering the education and welfare of children through implementation of the CTA." Your discussion further concludes, "The courts have held there is a compelling government interest in safeguarding the physical and psychological well being of a minor." The information in the accompanying article tells me the psychological well being of minors is being threatened. This despite two commissioners faith in the broadcasters that they of their own volition would provide wholesome and educational programming for children. I have been following news of up coming programs for fall and have seen no mention of any educational programs. Instead, I see what seems a flagrant attempt to do away with any programs for children.

I urge you to strengthen guidelines of the CTA to

1. Clearly define educational and informational programming.
2. Require stations to broadcast 1 hour per day of specifically designed educational and informational programs for children.
3. Insist such programs be of a standard length aired in a regularly scheduled time slot.
4. Specify that they should be aired between 7:00 AM and 10:00 PM.

Our children are our future. Our children are depending on you.

Gwen Thibodeau
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List A B C D E

Fall lineups replete with the rude and crude

Missoulian - August 27
By JAMES ENDRST
The Hartford Courant

If the 1995-96 prime-time season is truly a reflection of American society, as network programmers are saying, the country should wash its mouth and mind out with soap.

This is not a story about sex and violence, the V-chip, the First Amendment or the U.S. Congress.

This is a story about crass TV, the coarsening of America, a slow but steady slide into the gutter involving the nation's most pervasive and persuasive medium.

In the next few weeks, the four major networks — ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox

Broadcasting — will start rolling out their new fall lineups.

More than 30 new series — most of them comedies — will be introduced to prime time.

But viewers may be struck not so much by the shows this fall as by the scenes — TV moments signaling an aggregate acceptance of rude language, foul imagery and gross behavior in the entertainment mainstream.

One of the most striking examples is in a new CBS sitcom called "Bless This House," starring Andrew Clay, a stand-up comic formerly known as "the Diceman" whose routine was notoriously foul-

mouthed and anti-women.

Now Clay is being pitched as a big-hearted, blue-collar dad for the '90s named Burt Clayton.

"Bless This House," set for Wednesday nights at 8, is destined to be watched by millions, particularly opening night, when the Claytons' 12-year-old daughter, Danny, interrupts her mom's poker game to ask if her friend can stay over for the third time in a week.

"Are you having problems at home?" asks Alice Clayton, played by Cathy Moriarty.

No, the girl says, "My mom's just been having a lot of guys over."

Alice, within earshot of her daughter, concludes that the girl's mother wants her out of the house "so she can do it on the coffee table." Later in the same show, Danny says she needs her own bathroom.

"This wouldn't be a problem if you didn't spend all morning staring at your little hooters," her mother declares.

And finally, when Danny's 7-year-old brother, Sean, working on a Columbus Day project, asks, "What did Columbus do?" Danny answers, "He discovered America and gave the Indians syphilis."

This, in what used to be known as "the family hour" on what used to be known as "the Tiffany network."